

Draft
Finding of No Significant Impact
Implementation of 2005 Base Realignment
and Closure (BRAC) Recommendations
and Master Planning Activities
Walter Reed Army Medical Center
Forest Glen Annex, Maryland

The 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) Commission recommended that certain realignment actions occur at Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) Forest Glen Annex (FGA), Maryland. These recommendations, made in conformance with the provisions of the Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-510, as amended), require the relocation of certain units, agencies, and activities to FGA and from FGA to other military installations. In addition to the BRAC recommendations, the Army has identified certain units, agencies, and activities whose relocation to FGA would be appropriate on a discretionary basis (i.e., not BRAC-directed). To accommodate these changes at FGA, the Army would require construction, renovation, and demolition of certain facilities. FGA also proposes to revise its Real Property Master Plan (RPMP) to ensure the continued orderly development of the post.

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (Title 40 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] Parts 1500–1508) for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (Title 42 of the United States Code [U.S.C.] 4321 *et seq.*) and 32 CFR Part 651 (*Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*), the Army conducted an environmental assessment (EA) of the potential environmental and socioeconomic effects associated with implementing the BRAC recommendations, BRAC discretionary moves, and RPMP.

Proposed Action

The Army proposes to implement the following BRAC Commission-directed and discretionary realignment actions to FGA. The BRAC Commission directed that the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR) Division of Retrovirology move from leased space in Rockville, Maryland, to FGA. The BRAC Commission also directed the closure of WRAMC but did not identify the future locations of certain units, agencies, and activities that would be retained by the Army. In its discretion, the Army proposes to relocate from the WRAMC Main Section to FGA the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) Department of Defense (DoD) Veterinary Pathology Residency Program, a portion of the AFIP Tissue Repository, and the National Museum of Health and Medicine. Command and control of FGA would also transfer from WRAMC to Fort Detrick.

The BRAC Commission directed that three units, agencies, and activities relocate from FGA. These are the Combat Casualty Care Research sub-functions of the WRAIR and the Naval Medical Research Center (NMRC) (to relocate to Fort Sam Houston, Texas), the Medical Biological Defense Research of WRAIR and NMRC (to relocate to Fort Detrick, Maryland), and the Medical Chemical Defense Research (to relocate to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland).

The Army also proposes the following non-BRAC actions: move the WRAIR Medical Research Laboratory from its current location on FGA to a new Clinical Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP)-compliant facility, construct a new Child Development Center (CDC), construct a new warehouse and administrative space building, and expand the existing post fire station into a new emergency services facility complex.

As a result of the foregoing actions, FGA would experience an increase of approximately 220 personnel.

As a result of BRAC, the Army identified FGA as a receiver of several missions. Implementation of BRAC would require renovation of existing facilities and construction of new facilities to accommodate increases in personnel and functions assigned to FGA. To accommodate these changes, the RPMP would be updated to accommodate these changes, and the primary parts of the RPMP update are: land use plan update, which addresses guidance for land use on FGA; Short-Range Component (SRC), which addresses short-range planning initiatives through 2011, including BRAC actions; Long-Range Component (LRC), which addresses requirements for long-term mission changes through 2026; and Transportation Management Plan (TMP), which addresses corresponding transportation network changes needed to implement the SRC and LRC.

Alternatives Considered

The EA analyzed alternatives for BRAC discretionary, non-BRAC, and the RPMP actions. The Army examined four potential locations for the discretionary relocation of the DoDVPR Program: FGA; Fort Detrick, Maryland; Fort Sam Houston, Texas; and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, Bethesda, Maryland. In comparison to FGA, the latter three potential locations were found to have very few benefits for relocation of the DoDVPR Program. The Army found that FGA was the preferred site primarily because FGA currently houses a veterinary pathology laboratory at the WRAIR, locating at FGA would expose pathology residents to DoD research earlier in their careers, and movement of personnel to FGA would be at no cost to the government, as it falls within the same region as the current location of the AFIP. The Army also considered the discretionary relocation of the museum to the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. Subsequent to that proposal, requirements associated with the establishment of the new medical center in Bethesda grew substantially upon inclusion of the Warrior Transition Unit and Center of Excellence for Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. These high priority initiatives have brought the new medical center's physical capacity to its limit. The Army now proposes to relocate the museum to FGA. Data on cost of base realignment actions identified placement of the museum at FGA. The museum's relocation to the Bethesda site is no longer practicable and is not evaluated in detail in this EA. Directed moves (i.e., WRAIR Retrovirology) do not need alternative locations outside of FGA to be analyzed.

The SRC includes eight facilities projects, both BRAC and non-BRAC, and the LRC includes six facilities projects. This assortment of projects reflects the minimum needs of FGA, as currently known, to receive and house relocating units, agencies, and activities and to continue to provide appropriate levels of support (e.g., emergency services and child care). Inclusion of other projects is not necessary to meet mission requirements; exclusion of any of the cited projects would impair the abilities of FGA to perform its mission. Accordingly, other projects are not evaluated in detail.

Using off-post leased space to meet FGA's requirements would involve several major drawbacks. Force protection policies specify certain facilities characteristics, such as physical security features, set-back from roadways, and "hardened" construction. Using leased space in the private sector—having personnel and equipment both on-post and off-post—would adversely affect command and control functions, result in higher operational costs, and impair efficient use of resources. For these reasons, use of leased space is not feasible and is not further evaluated in this EA.

Construction of new facilities is driven by the need to ensure that adequate space is available for mission requirements. Before the installation considers construction of new buildings, existing space and renovations are used whenever possible. Officials at FGA have examined the post's existing inventory of approximately 1 million SF of space and found, with only two available facilities, that it is fully utilized for current mission requirements. Beyond these renovations, new construction is required. Potential environmental effects associated with new construction are evaluated in detail in this EA.

1 While some variations of the present proposal for siting of facilities might be possible, the locations
2 identified in this EA reflect a sound, compatible set of solutions. Alternative siting schemes would
3 produce different, but not better, layouts.
4

5 While it might be possible to derive alternative recommendations that those presented in the proposed
6 TMP, those that are contained in it are believed to represent the best coherent set of strategies for FGA's
7 present and future transportation needs. In light of the way the TMP is compiled, it currently represents
8 the sole set of proposed solutions. Accordingly, other alternatives, likely not as feasible as those
9 contained in the TMP, are not evaluated in detail in this EA.
10

11 As prescribed by the CEQ Regulations, the EA also evaluated the No Action Alternative, in which
12 agencies would not be relocated, but rather would remain where they are.
13

14 ***Factors Considered in Determining That No Environmental Impact Statement Is Required***

15 The EA, which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference into this Finding of No Significant
16 Impact (FNSI), examined in detail the potential effects of the proposed action and alternatives and the No
17 Action Alternative on areas of environmental and socioeconomic concern: land use, aesthetics and visual
18 resources, air quality, noise, geology and soils, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources,
19 socioeconomics (including environmental justice and protection of children), transportation, utilities, and
20 hazardous and toxic materials.
21

22 Implementation of the proposed action would result in a combination of short- and long-term negligible
23 to minor but not significant adverse effects as well as short- and long-term minor beneficial effects.
24 Short- and long-term minor beneficial effects on land use, aesthetics and visual resources, cultural
25 resources, economic development, utilities, and hazardous and toxic substances would be realized from
26 implementation of a sound RPMP and associated construction and operational activities. There would be
27 long-term negligible to minor but not significant adverse effects on land use, aesthetics and visual
28 resources, air quality, geology and soils, water resources, biological resources (vegetation and wildlife),
29 transportation, utilities, and hazardous waste associated with operational activities. There would be short-
30 term negligible to minor adverse effects on aesthetics and visual resources, air quality, noise, geology
31 and soils, water resources, wildlife, social services, transportation, utilities, and hazardous and toxic
32 substances, primarily associated with construction and renovation activities. Short-term minor adverse
33 effects on social services would be expected until municipal and private sector services would be able to
34 respond to an increase in residents in the area with increases in these services. Cumulative adverse
35 effects would be minor and reflects the cumulative addition of effects from the proposed action plus the
36 implementation of other proposals planned in the vicinity of the site alternatives on land use and
37 airspace, air quality, water resources, transportation, and utilities.
38

39 Sound engineering practices and best management practices (BMPs) would be undertaken in accordance
40 with existing regulations and policies to reduce, avoid, or compensate for adverse effects would include,
41 for example, following all applicable laws and regulations for handling all hazardous materials and
42 wastes; implementing state-approved, BMPs for storm water control during construction; designing
43 facilities according to the principles of low-impact development; recycling construction debris where
44 possible; revegetating disturbed sites; and implementing the TMP.
45

46 ***Conclusions***

47 On the basis of the EA, which is herewith incorporated, it has been determined that implementation of
48 the proposed action under any of the alternatives would not have significant effects on the quality of
49 human life or the natural environment; therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is
50 not required. Subject to comments that might be received from individuals, organizations, or agencies,

1 the Army intends to execute a Final FNSI 30 days after its release for public review. Upon issuance of
2 the Final FNSI, the Army may proceed with implementation of its proposed action.

3
4 **Public Review**

5 The Final EA and Draft FNSI are available for review and comment for 30 days, beginning August 20,
6 2008. Copies of the EA and Draft FNSI or additional information concerning the EA can be requested
7 from Ms. Anne Delp, WRAMC BRAC Office, Building 1, 6900 Georgia Avenue NW, Washington, DC,
8 20307-5001, or by e-mail requests to Anne.Delp@amedd.army.mil. A copy has also been provided to the
9 following libraries: Silver Spring Branch Library (8901 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, MD) and the
10 WRAMC Main Section Library, Washington, DC. The EA is also available on the following Web site:
11 http://www.hqda.army.mil/acsim/brac/env_ea_review.htm. Comments on the EA and draft FNSI should
12 be submitted to the WRAMC BRAC Office at the physical address or e-mail address given above by no
13 later than September 19, 2008.

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17 _____
18 Bruce Haselden
19 Colonel
20 Garrison Commander
Walter Reed Army Medical Center

Date